AN

ELECTION SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE

THE

GENERAL COURT,

OF

NEW-HAMPSHIRE,

AT

PORTSMOUTH,

JUNE 2, 1785.

By JEREMY BELKNAP.

"The best part of a people is always the lesser; and of that best part, the wisest is always the best."

M. S. of GOVERNOR WINTHROP.

PORTSMOUTH, NEW-HAMPSHIRE.

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M,DCC,LXXXV.

STATE OF *NEW-HAMPSHIRE.*

In the HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES, *June* 3, 1785.

VOTED, *That* Mr. PICKERING, Col. TOPPAN, *and* Col. GILMAN, *with such of the* Hon. SENATE *as they shall join be a* COMMITTEE *to wait upon the* Rev. Mr. BELKNAP, *and return him the thanks of the* GENERAL COURT, *for the very ingenious* Diſcourſe *delivered yeſterday, and requeſt a copy for the Preſs.*

Sent up for CONCURRENCE,

JOHN SULLIVAN, *Speaker.*

In SENATE *June* 9, 1785, READ *and* CONCURRED, *and* Mr. ATKINSON *joined.*

JOSEPH PEARSON, *Dep'ty Sec'ry.*

AN

ELECTION SERMON.

IN obedience to the appointment of the late honorable General Court, I appear in the deſk on this occaſion. It becomes not me to cenſure their conduct, in overlooking my worthy fathers and elder brethren, whom propriety would have placed before me in ſuch a ſervice. This as well as other reaſons might have legitimated my declining to accept the honor; but ſuch a ſtep might have been miſconſtrued, as if it had proceeded from a diſapprobation of a practice worthily begun, and which ſome of the beſt characters among us wiſh may be continued, namely, the entering on the yearly buſineſs of legiſlation, by a religious ſolemnity.

It ſhall now be my endeavor, with the freedom of an American, to offer ſome thoughts on what I conceive to be the true intereſt, and the beſt means of the proſperity of this State, and that

portion of ſcripture which I have choſen as the theme of a diſcourſe on this occaſion is

PSALM 144, 11—15.

" *Rid me and deliver me from the hand of ſtrange children; whoſe mouth ſpeaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falſhood.*

" *That our ſons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner-ſtones, poliſhed after the ſimilitude of a palace.*

" *That our garners may be full, affording all manner of ſtore; that our ſheep may bring forth thouſands, and ten thouſands in our ſtreets.*

" *That our oxen may be ſtrong to labour; that there be no breaking in nor going out, that there be no complaining in our ſtreets.*

" *Happy is that people that is in ſuch a caſe; yea, happy is that people whoſe* GOD *is the* LORD."

DAVID was a wiſe and faithful prince, ever attentive to the true intereſt of the people whom he governed. It was no diſadvantage to him that he was raiſed from the humble employment of a ſhepherd, to be a ſupreme ruler; for having paſſed through the lower ſtations of life, and been converſant with men of every order and degree, he well knew what duty every man could do; what burdens they could bear; how they thought; what they ſaid; how they were to be

pleaſed

pleaſed, or offended; and in what manner their different capacities and genuiſes might be employed for the general ſervice of the kingdom. Having been intimately acquainted with perſons diſaffected to the government of his predeceſſor, he underſtood the ſecret workings of jealouſy, envy, and ambition, and how to counterwork their baneful influence. Having been obliged to take refuge from the perſecuting fury of Saul, among the open and profeſſed enemies of his country, into whoſe confidence he had the addreſs to inſinuate himſelf ſo far as to be entruſted with a command, he acquired a knowledge of their ſecret counſels, their views, their arts, and methods of war. In ſuch ways was this truly great man trained up, till he had acquired thoſe accompliſhments which fitted him to be ruler over Iſrael, whoſe true intereſt ſeems to have lain near his heart, to have employed his ſecret thoughts, to have been the ſubject of his devotions, and in many of his poetical compoſitions.

At what time, or on what particular occaſion, this Pſalm was written, we have no other information than what may be gained from its internal characters. It ſeems from thence to have been written, when David apprehended the king-

dom was in danger, from enemies, either foreign or domeſtic. They are called "*ſtrange children*" and their character is that "*their mouth ſpeaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falſhood*;" from them David prays GOD to deliver him, and takes encouragement from his paſt experience of the divine goodneſs, from the vanity of human power, and from the ſuperior avenging arm of heaven, to hope that he ſhould be delivered.

WHO theſe ſtrange children were, we can but conjecture. They might be the tribes of roving Arabs, who were often ſeeking opportunities to commit depredations on the peaceful inhabitants, robbing them of their ſeed-corn, laying waſte their fields, driving away their cattle and ſheep, or carrying their children into captivity. Or they might be the formidable Philiſtines, who made war in a more regular manner, and had a moſt inveterate hatred to the nation of Iſrael: Or they might be domeſtic enemies; either the remnant of the old Canaanites, who were incorporated with Iſrael, and often proved a ſcourge to them; or ſome of the Iſraelites themſelves ſeduced and degenerated ſo far as to take part with them againſt their brethren. But, be their perſons who they will, their characters are fairly drawn, they were

"*ſtrange*

"*ſtrange children*," alienated from, and oppoſed to the intereſt of the nation; their views were inimical, and they ſought to hinder thoſe things which David regarded as the beſt means of the proſperity of his people. "*Whoſe mouth ſpeaketh vanity.*" Vanity is a general name for wickedneſs, and it may here be underſtood as ſomething ſpoken againſt the things which David deſired. They were perſons whoſe aims and deſigns were unfriendly to the public intereſt, and whoſe tongues were employed in propagating bad principles, and prejudicing the minds of the people againſt the means of improvement.

"*Their right hand is a right hand of falſhood.*" The right hand among the ancients was an emblem of power. Theſe then were perſons who had power to do miſchief. If they were domeſtic enemies, they were perſons in office, or who had influence over the people to miſlead them, by falſe reaſonings, and work on their paſſions or prejudices; if they were bad neighbours, they had ſtrength enough to make inroads and commit violence, to break up ſettlements, to lay waſte fields and diſperſe families.

THESE are ſome of their characters. But we may learn ſomething more of them, if we conſider what

advantages David expected from the deliverance which he prays for. "*That our ſons may be as plants grown up in their youth.*" He was a friend to education, and wiſhed that all obſtacles to this good work might be taken away. Plants which grow up when they are young, that is, which attain their form and ſize while the growing ſeaſon continues, are more uſeful as well as pleaſant than thoſe which are neglected or ſtinted in their growth. So children, who have the proper means of education during the ſeaſon of improvement, are in general better fitted for uſefulneſs than thoſe who are neglected.

"*That our daughters may be as corner ſtones poliſhed after the ſimilitude of a palace.*" We in this country know ſo little of palaces, that we may not be able to comprehend the full force of this alluſion; but we may depend upon it, that it means ſomething extremely elegant and beautiful; thoſe beauties, thoſe virtues, thoſe graces in which the ſofter ſex are deſtined by nature to ſhine, ſet off to the beſt advantage by due cultivation and improvement. The fineſt marble is capable of the higheſt poliſh, and it is an injury to it if we let it go without the finiſhing hand of the moſt delicate artificer.

HENCE we may conclude that theſe "*ſtrange children*" were perſons whoſe views were unfriendly to family order, and the education of youth, and as theſe were bleſſings of which David fully knew the value, it was natural for him to pray for deliverance from ſuch enemies. But another happy conſequence which he expected to reſult from their removal, was the increaſe of the fruits of the earth, and of thoſe beaſts which were uſeful for burden and for food. "*That our garners may be full, affording all manner of ſtore; that our ſheep may bring forth thouſands, and ten thouſands in our ſtreets; that our oxen may be ſtrong to labor.*" In ſuch a country as David's, "*a land of hills and vallies, and that drinketh water of the rain of heaven,*" theſe were the moſt natural and profitable productions, the true ſources of wealth and independence. He was fully ſenſible from his own experience, and his acquaintance with mankind, that a country able to ſubſiſt by its own native produce, and a race of ſubjects inured to field-labour, and attached to the ſoil by the right of inheritance, afforded the beſt ſupport to his throne, and the ſureſt means of defence: That his country might be thus bleſſed, he prayed to be delivered from thoſe perſons who had power to prevent the increaſe of theſe natural bleſſings.

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THE laſt line of their character is pointed out in that additional bleſſing, which he foreſees will be the reſult of their removal; "*that there be no breaking in nor going out, that there be no complaining in our ſtreets.*" Theſe words ſeem to deſcribe a ſtate of predatory war, ſuch as is uſually made by ſavage nations, who attack by ſurpriſe and carry away priſoners and plunder in a ſudden, violent and irreſiſtable manner, leaving the remaining inhabitants ſufficient cauſe of complaint, but no means of redreſs. Such enemies have been known in this country, as well as David's, and we have reaſon to regard a deliverance from them as one of the greateſt mercies.

HAVING mentioned theſe as the particular bleſſings which he wiſhed might be the portion of the people whom he governed, and which he expected would follow the removal of the enemies they were then troubled with, he reviews the ſubject in devout admiration, and exclaims "*happy is the people that is in ſuch a caſe.*" Theſe were the moſt valuable of all national temporal bleſſings, and ſuch a people were, as far as theſe could make them, happy; but as this could not be the caſe of a people without the peculiar providence of the ſupreme being, he adds, "*yea happy is that people*

whoſe

whoſe GOD *is the* LORD ;" implying, that a people thus highly favoured with the beſt means of national proſperity were a people under the parental care of the beſt of beings, who was their guardian and deliverer. But there is a farther idea comprized in the ſentence, for a people who have ſuch a GOD as this, and are not ſenſible of their obligations to him, nor diſpoſed to make grateful and devout returns to him, cannot be called happy. Happineſs conſiſts not barely in poſſeſſing the means of enjoyment, but in having a ſenſe of the ſource from whence they flow, and in being diſpoſed to make a proper uſe of them. Therefore, if a people who are in ſuch a caſe are happy, if they are happy in having the LORD for their GOD, it muſt be underſtood that they have a knowledge of this GOD, a ſenſe of their obligations to him, and a dipoſition to do his will as it is made known to them. The nation of Iſrael had ſufficient means of knowing, worſhipping and ſerving this GOD, ſo have we ; and when we are ſenſible of our obligations to him, and diſpoſed to fulfil them, we ſhall be a truly happy people.

FROM the text thus deſcanted on, we may gather what were in David's view, the proper objects of a ruler's attention, and the ſure means of national proſperity, viz. THE

THE education of youth.—The improvement of the country.—Peace, and religion.

SHALL I now endeavor to excite the attention of this aſſembly, and particularly of the public Repreſentative Fathers of this people, to theſe noble objects, thus pointed out to our view by one of the greateſt Princes and wiſeſt Stateſmen that ever lived.

THE *education of youth* is the moſt capital and important conſideration; the wiſeſt legiſlators in the world have attended to it as eſſential to the proſperity of a people, and the beſt writers on government have recommended it in the ſame view. "The duty of rulers (ſays one * of them) 'is not only to preſcribe good laws, by which 'every one may know how to behave; but to 'eſtabliſh the moſt perfect manner of public in-'ſtitution and education of youth. This is the 'only way of making ſubjects conform to the laws 'by reaſon and cuſtom, rather than fear of pun-'iſhment. Children are the hope and ſtrength 'of a nation, and it is too late to correct them 'when they are ſpoiled; it is infinitely better to 'prevent the evil than to puniſh it. It is not 'laws and ordinances, but good morals that re-'gulate the State. Thoſe who have had a bad 'education

* BURLAMAGUI's political Law, vol. 2, p. 144. 161.

'education make no ſcruple to violate the beſt 'conſtitutions in the world, whereas they who 'have been properly trained up, cheerfully con-'form to all good inſtitutions. The moſt effec-'tual means therefore, which a Sovereign can 'employ to promote the public happineſs, is to 'work on the mind by diſpoſing the hearts of his 'ſubjects to wiſdom and virtue, and to make them 'early acquainted with the rules of an happy and 'virtuous life. By means of public inſtruction, 'he has an effectual method of inſtilling juſt ideas 'into the minds of his ſubjects, and his authority 'has a very great influence on the internal actions, 'the thoughts and inclinations of thoſe who are 'ſubject to his laws, ſo far at leaſt as the nature 'of the thing will permit."

As an exemplification of theſe remarks, permit me to recite a paſſage from another author ‡ who thus celebrates the conduct of the great *Lycurgus*. "He 'looked upon the education of youth as the moſt im-'portant object of a legiſlators care. His grand prin-'ciple was that children belong to the State more 'than to their parents, and therefore he would have 'the State entruſted with the general care of their

'education

‡ ROLLIN's ancient Hiſtory vol. 2, p. 292.

'education, in order to have them formed on uni-
'form conſtant principles, which might inſpire
'them betimes with the love of their country
'and of virtue. The long duration of the laws
'of *Lycurgus* is very wonderful; but the means
'he uſed to ſucceed, are no leſs worthy of admi-
'ration; the principal of theſe was the excellent edu-
'cation of youth. The religious obligation of
'an oath which he exacted from the citizens,
'would have been but a feeble tie, had he not by
'education infuſed his laws as it were into the
'minds and manners of the children. This was
'the reaſon that his principal ordinances ſubſiſted
'above five hundred years."

THAT ſentiment of *Lycurgus*, that "children belong to the State more than to their parents" ought to be deeply engraved on the heart of every perſon who is concerned in making or executing laws, eſpecially thoſe which relate to the morals of the people. Nature hath diffuſed her gifts with an impartial as well as a liberal hand; ſhe gives genius to thoſe who have not, as well as to thoſe who have the means within their power to cultivate and improve it. There are as many good capacities among the children of the poor, who are not able to give them a good education, as of the rich who are;

and

and if it is the duty and intereſt of the State to avail itſelf of the capacities of all its citizens, it is then their duty and intereſt to cultivate thoſe capacities. Children indeed depend in a great meaſure on their parents, and are by nature ſubject to family government; but the public ought in juſtice to itſelf to provide the means of inſtruction for all; then, if parents will not ſuffer their children to uſe thoſe means of inſtruction, the fault will be theirs. But this is very ſeldom the caſe; moſt parents are fond of putting their children under public inſtruction, if it can be had, and many are daily complaining for the want of it.

It is rare to find a genius ſtrong enough to ſtruggle with the diſadvantages ariſing from the want of early education, and by its own native force and perſeverance make its way into public life, and attain its proper rank in ſociety; yet ſuch inſtances there are, and ſome principal characters in this State, both dead and living may be reckoned of the number: but how many more have there been, with a genius not inferior, who for want of that cultivation which in other places is thrown away on blockheads, have languiſhed in obſcurity, or turned their attention to inferior objects, or perverted their faculties to ignoble purſuits

ſuits, and fallen among the ſplendid ruins of human nature! The loſs which this State ſuffers by the want of proper methods of education, is inconceivable: Genius of every kind is not ſcarcer here than in any other parts of the continent, or the world; but if a country ſtored with diamonds lying in their native cruſt, may be denominated poor, becauſe it is neglected, what brand of infamy ſhall we deſerve, if we will take no pains to reſcue our richeſt treaſures and brighteſt ornaments from perpetual obſcurity!

If we look into our new ſettlements of leſs than twenty years ſtanding, ſhall we not find a great number of perſons, now in the bloom of youth, who ſcarce ever had an opportunity to enter the doors of a ſchool; who, if their parents are unable to teach them, muſt remain deſtitute of the firſt rudiments of education; theſe youth are to be the future ſtrength and ſupport of the State; and what a ſet of men will by and by come upon the ſtage under all theſe diſadvantages! How melancholy to think that a great part of the riſing generation is likely to be ignorant & unprincipled! that our town-officers, our jurors, juſtices, judges, and even our legiſlators may in ſome future time be compoſed of ſuch perſons!

In ſome of our old towns the caſe has of late years been not much better, I ſay, of late, becauſe there is certainly a difference between former and later times in this reſpect. I could produce you a proof from the public records, that in the year 1722, at the beginning of an indian war, one of the then frontier-towns was obliged to petition the General Court, and a ſpecial act was made to releaſe them from the obligation of maintaining a Grammar School, becauſe of the danger and diſtreſs ariſing from the war, then carried on at their doors; but this favor could not then be granted them, but on this expreſs condition, that they ſhould maintain an inferior ſchool during the whole of that war. Now mark the contraſt! In the late war, not only that, but many other towns, large and opulent, and far enough removed from all fear of the enemy, were deſtitute of public ſchools of any kind, not only without leave of the legiſlature, but contrary to the expreſs requirement of law, and notwithſtanding courts of juſtice were frequently held in ſome of them, and juries ſolemnly ſworn and charged to preſent all breaches of law, and the want of ſchools among the reſt. What could this inattention be owing to? Could it be imagined that in a time of war, education was unneceſſary? or

that it did not tend to qualify men for ſoldiers? It is well known, and the late war has proved it over again, if it needed proof, that the men of this State are an hardy robuſt race, patient of fatigue, inured to hardſhips, and able to look an enemy in the face without terror; theſe qualities are eſſential to a good ſoldier: I ſuppoſe too, that when commanded by officers in whom they can confide, they are at leaſt equal to any of their American brethren for diſcipline and ſubordination; but in the preſent mode of conducting war, ſome degree of learning is neceſſary to qualify even theſe men for a command: A ſoldier cannot riſe to the rank of an orderly ſerjeant without ſome knowledge of letters: and what a pity is it, that for want of inſtruction in this uſeful branch of ſcience, the braveſt men ſhould ſtand no chance for preferment.

With regard to civil ſociety, the proſpect is truly alarming. Our notions of liberty, if they are not guided and limited by good education, degenerate into a ſavage independence. Uninformed and unprincipled as the riſing generation in many places are, they will not readily ſubmit to the reſtraints of law, nor have any idea of obedience. Too many already go by no other rule than

than their own wills ; when they are injured they ſeek to revenge themſelves, and, when they are oppoſed to any public meaſure, they think that their appearing and voting or proteſting againſt it, will free them from the obligation of abiding by the ſenſe of the majority. But ſhould any length of time or turn of affairs blunt theſe ſenſations of freedom which are now all alive, and impatient of controul, then without the means of education, how eaſily may our poſterity be gulled out of their liberties by an artful and inſidious few, who may have all the wealth and learning in their hands ; If town ſchools be not encouraged, if education be not laid open and common to every family of whatever eſtate and condition, the rich only will be able to cultivate the minds of their children by ſending them to diſtant academies or univerſities ; the learning of the country will then be only among men of property, and the reſt being ignorant, may be eaſily deceived. How favorable ſuch a circumſtance may prove to uſurpation and tyranny, I dread to think ! What will become of your republican governments, if they are not nurtured by public education, and ſtrengthened by public virtue ? If theſe points be not attended to, you may expect a domineering ariſtocracy to ſucceed your preſent democratic forms,

and

and what that will degenerate into, let the nature of aſpiring ambition, and the hiſtories of fallen republics tell.

If we turn our attention to the religious ſtate of the country, what an ill aſpect has the want of education on ſociety? the religion of ignorant people is ſuperſtition. Having no foundation laid in their minds by regular inſtruction, they will not be likely to think ſoberly or rationally of any article of faith or moral duty. They will not candidly enquire and impartially determine what is truth and what is duty; but will either take their religion upon truſt from human authority, or be ſubject to frights and fits, and deluſions: Any bold and cunning impoſters will lead them aſtray, their imaginations will be tickled with novelties, or their fears excited by harſh ſounds; and they will proſtitute their affections to thoſe who pretend a love for them, but whoſe only aim is to make a prey of their ſubſtance. They will be led to believe pretended propheſies and pretended miracles; they will "*learn the way of the heathen, and be diſmayed at the ſigns of heaven*;" they will think rocks and mountains inhabited by evil ſpirits; they will believe in witchcraft and ſorcery; and will pay more regard to the tricks of

conjurers

conjurers and fortune-tellers, than to the ſacred truths of divine Revelation.

But it may be ſaid, why all this complaint about education; have we not already laws that provide for the public teaching of youth? and is there not an order of men appointed to take notice of and preſent the towns for non-compliance? It may be anſwered, we have indeed ſuch laws; but are they not like a decayed building that needs repairs? As to the buſineſs of grand-jurors, if we were to judge by their oath, we ſhould certainly think they had enough to do; when we hear them ſworn "diligently to enquire, and true 'preſentment to make of all ſuch matters and 'things as ſhall be given them in charge; that 'they ſhall preſent no man for envy, hatred or 'malice, neither leave any unpreſented for love, 'fear, favor, affection or hope of reward; but 'ſhall preſent things truly as they come to their 'knowledge, according to the beſt of their un-'derſtanding;" when we hear this oath adminiſtred, and a charge from the bench, explaining and enforcing the duty, any man of common underſtanding would think that the grand-jurors had a large field of action open before them. But, if we are to judge by their practice, we may be apt to ſuſpect

that

that there is a certain magic power in that oath, which at once deprives a man of the ſenſes of ſeeing and hearing, and of the faculty of ſpeech. Other perſons, and even theſe, when not under oath, can obſerve and complain of many groſs breaches of law, many notorious flagrant omiſſions of the duties enjoined by law; but grand-jurors at once deaf and blind, and dumb, can neither enquire nor preſent, unleſs ſome perſon whoſe buſineſs it is *not*, ſhall force upon them a complaint and ſupport it by evidence; and what is this owing to in a great meaſure, but to the want of education?

From theſe, and other conſiderations which might be ſuggeſted, it is devoutly to be wiſhed that our rulers would reviſe the laws concerning education, and take ſome effectual methods for the execution of them. Youth are daily growing up to manhood, and if good principles are not early implanted in their minds, bad ones will aſſume their place like noxious weeds in a neglected garden.—But who are they that demand this attention? your own children; the children of your fellow citizens; of thoſe who have borne and are bearing the public burdens, and paying the public taxes; of thoſe who have ſuffered and bled in your cauſe; of thoſe who have fallen in defence of your liber-

ties,

ties, and whoſe blood if it could ſpeak from the earth, would loudly aſſert and claim their childrens rights. Theſe children are in ſome future day to ſtand in your place, and do the duty which is now required of you, and how will they be able to do it, unleſs you now provide them the means of inſtruction? Do you think it your duty to clear the woods and cultivate the wilderneſs? and will you not think it your duty to cultivate that nobler ſoil, the human mind, and clear it of thoſe incumbrances of ignorance and error, with which it is now overſpread? Let this important work be effectually done, and let it be ſaid that where there was the moſt need of education, the beſt means have been uſed, and the moſt generous remedies faithfully applied. ‡

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‡ Dr. PRICE in his obſervations on the American revolution earneſtly recommends to us "the eſtabliſhment of a wiſe and liberal plan of education," and gives it as his opinion, that there is "a *ſecret* remaining to be diſcovered in education, which will cauſe 'future generations to grow up virtuous and happy, and accelerate 'human happineſs to a greater degree than can at preſent be ima-'gined." The diſcovery of this *ſecret* is of more importance to the world than all the mines of Mexico and Peru, and every approach toward it ought to be regarded with attention. Perhaps its diſcovery like the appearance of light may be gradual. The Dr. has given us one hint which is a valuable advance, and may lead to others. "The buſineſs of education ſays he, ſhould be to teach *how to think*, rather than "*what to think*." Is it not equally uſeful to be taught how to *act*? Is it not an object of as great importance that youth ſhould be led to admire and approve what is noble, generous and worthy, and to abhor what is vicious, mean and deteſtable, as that they ſhould learn the rudiments of grammar, and the beauties of ſtyle and compoſition? and if the ſame precept-

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THE ſecond object of public attention as pointed out to us in the words of the royal Pſalmiſt, is *the improvement of the country.*

EVERY country in the world is furniſhed by the GOD of nature with ſome peculiar advantages. To underſtand what theſe are, and how they are to be improved, is a part of the buſineſs of wiſe and faithful rulers.

IT is paſt doubt, that the greater part of the people inhabiting this State muſt be employed in huſbandry, the original buſineſs of man, and the

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or, the ſame books, and the ſame time may be employed in promoting both theſe purpoſes, would it not be a ſpecies of literary œconomy worth attending to? Suppoſe the maſter ſhould ſet apart one day in the week to put his pupils on reviewing what they have learned, not merely with a view to perfect them in the grammatical conſtruction of words and ſentences, or the beauties of rhetorical diction; but to dive into the ſentiments of the books or parts of books of which they have ſkimmed the ſurface, and ſhould examine them concerning the perſons or things, of which the author treats, *leading them to find out* principles and manners, virtues and vices, and how to praiſe or blame, to imitate, correct or avoid; would not this one day be as well ſpent as any other, and would not youth be put into a way of criticiſing perſons and things, as well as words and phraſes? would they not learn a method of reading, obſerving, enquiring, and judging which might fit them for uſefulneſs in every ſtage of life, and in every branch of buſineſs? Why might not ſuch a mode of inſtruction be introduced into every ſchool? Hiſtorical and Biographical works may be eminently ſerviceable, and even the BIBLE may not be uſeleſs.

Should any one enter into the ſpirit of this method, with an happy talent of adapting it to the capacities of youth; he might not find it a difficult talk to initiate them early into a knowledge of the *principles of government*, a branch of ſcience which under a republican conſtitution, every man ought in ſome degree to be acquainted with, *before* he is called to officiate in the Legiſlative, Executive or Judicial ſphere.

natural ſource of that equality and independence, which are eſſential to a republican government. Heaven hath bleſſed us with a variety of ſoils. Mountains, vallies, plains and meadows appear in ſucceſſion to the eye of the traveller; and theſe are capable of producing every ſort of neceſſary for the ſupport of man and beaſt. We need be at no loſs for ſtaple commodities, if we will but attend to the hints which nature hath given us, and improve the advantages which ſhe hath put into our hands. The increaſe of our corn and cattle ought to be a principal object of the legiſlator's care. England, it is ſaid, was not a corn country, 'till the parliament about a century ago, eſtabliſhed a bounty upon the exportation of it. This encouraged the raiſing of great quantities, more than ſufficient for home conſumption. Such a meaſure might be equally beneficial here, if our ſituation was not ſo very inconvenient, that the only ſea-port in the State is, and always will be unfrequented, by a great part of the inland country, whoſe commodities will find an eaſier tranſportation to other places.* Our

* Any perſon by caſting his eye on a map of New-Hampſhire, and the country eaſtward of it muſt be convinced, that the whole territory between the upper part of Connecticut river, on the weſt, and the Ocean as far as the river Kennebeck, on the eaſt, and as far northward as the bounds of the United States extend, is formed by nature to have a neceſſary connexion, and ought in reaſon to be one

Our inland navigation is another branch of improvement which merits attention. The country is richly watered by the hand of nature; but this like other ſpecies of natural riches needs the aſſiſtance of art and labor. If ſome canals were cut, ſome obſtacles removed, and ſome carrying places eſtabliſhed, and of this laſt circumſtance much may be learned from the example of the indians; we might take advantage of our numerous ſtreams and ponds, to tranſport merchandize into the country, and convey its productions to market, much eaſier and cheaper than at preſent. Such an improvement would alſo ſtrengthen the connexion, which for political reaſons ought always to be maintained between the ſeveral parts of the ſame State, and which for want of ſome means of intereſted communication, in this, is yet too lax and feeble.

Nature hath furniſhed our ſeas and rivers with a variety of fiſh, which have been a great ſupport

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one juriſdiction. The dividing line between New-Hampſhire and the late Province of Main cuts this territory in ſuch a manner as to make two juriſdictions extremely inconvenient. Thoſe townſhips which lie on the upper branches of Saco river have already found their market at Falmouth; but thoſe on the heads of Connecticut and Amoriſcoggin rivers, being ſeperated from the lower parts of the State, by a range of mountains, the higheſt in New-England, and in moſt places inacceſſible, muſt find their way to ſome navigable parts of Kennebeck. And it would be more natural for them to be connected in government where they are connected in trade.

ſupport to multitudes in the moſt difficult times, and are capable of being made an article of very lucrative trade. This was an object much more attended to in former years than of late; but it is of ſuch importance as to demand all the encouragement which can be beſtowed upon it.

Our manufactures are few, and muſt be ſo, while land is plenty and cheap. But the importation of foreign manufactures in large quantities may be a great diſadvantage, eſpecially if they are to be paid for in our current coin; and all attempts to introduce articles of luxury and needleſs expence ſhould be carefully guarded againſt. Luxury has been the ruin of republican States in other parts of the world; and the ſame cauſe will be likely to produce the ſame effect. Every ſpecies of home-manufacture which can be carried on to advantage, ought to receive all poſſible encouragement; nor can we long maintain the character of an independent people, unleſs we cultivate induſtry and œconomy.

It may admit of doubt, whether our lumber trade as it is now conducted be on the whole, an advantage or a diſadvantage. To make it a certain benefit, ſome good regulations are wanting, which

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may alſo help the moral part of our character. † The free and exceſſive uſe of ſtrong liquor is one pernicious effect of this traffic, and a fruitful ſource of innumerable evils.

But I will quit this head with reminding our honored rulers, that if the health, the properties, the morals, the natural and political intereſts of a large and increaſing number of people are committed to them, the charge is of a moſt ſerious nature, and of immenſe value, and ought to be attended to with zeal and fidelity. Now is the time, at the beginning of the conſtitution, to eſtabliſh good laws, and introduce good precedents for the direction of poſterity. The improvement of thoſe advantages which the God of nature and providence hath put into our hands, is a proper tribute of gratitude which he demands, and the only effectual one which we can render to him.

I paſs on to mention another capital mean of natural proſperity, and that is, *peace*.

A time of peace is the proper ſeaſon to make uſe of our national advantages, and put things into

† Since this diſcourſe was delivered, an act has paſſed the General Court, for regulating the ſize of various ſpecies of lumber, and appointing proper ſurveyors; which when carried into effect, will, it is preſumed, be of great public utility.

into a way of improvement. While there is "*no breaking in nor going out*," our numbers are increaſing, and our huſbandry, merchandize and fiſhery ought to be thriving, and the means of education and other ſources of improvement ſhould have every aſſiſtance.

We have ſeen of late as well as formerly, how unfavorable a ſtate of war is to all civil and moral improvement; how it tends to deprave the morals of the people, as well as to take off the ſtrength and flower of our youth from the labours of the field, to reduce our numbers, and make breaches in our families. But now that this ſcourge is removed, how careful ſhould we be to cultivate the arts of peace, and take every poſſible method to continue and preſerve it.

It is a melancholy conſideration that one of the moſt effectual methods to preſerve peace is to be prepared for war; but ſuch is the preſent conſtitution of things in this unhappy world, and ſuch it will be, 'till the goſpel of peace ſhall ſo far prevail and extend its influence, as that the nations will either avoid all occaſions of controverſy, or agree to refer their diſputes to ſome arbitrating power, with a peaceful deſign to abide its determination. The diſtant hint of ſuch a propoſal

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does honor to the benevolent heart that conceived it, and will do more honor to the States or nations that ſhall publicly recommend and adopt it. * But at preſent it ſeems as if things muſt go on in their old courſe. The luſt of power has been a ruling paſſion ever ſince the days of *Nimrod*; and there is no effectual way to check it, but by forcible reſiſtance. Convinced that a nation cannot preſerve itſelf from inſult, but by rendering itſelf formidable, as a lover of peace, I muſt wiſh to ſee my country prepared for war; to ſee every cannon which now lies careleſsly about our ſtreets and wharves, and in our forts properly ſecured from decay; every muſket and ſword furbiſhed, and kept in the niceſt order; our militia officered, inſtructed, arranged and accoutred and ready for the field on the ſhorteſt notice; our arſenals and magazines well ſupplied; our fortifications repaired and ſtrengthened and garriſoned, at leaſt with invalids. God only knows who our next enemies may be, or how ſoon we may have occaſion for our veteran officers and ſoldiers, and our foreign friends and allies. In this view, it may not be amiſs to recommend as another mean of preſerving peace, the

* Vid Dr. Price's obſervations on the American revolution, p. 14.—15. and a detail of the tranſaction of the Maſſachuſetts General Court, in their laſt winter ſeſſion, publiſhed in the news-papers.

the payment of our domeſtic and foreign debts. If it is wiſe conduct in individuals to pay what they owe, that they may preſerve the affections of their friends, it muſt be equally wiſe in a State, be it ever ſo ſovereign or independent. And here indulge me to ſay, that our notions of ſovereignty may poſſibly appear to ſome older and wiſer nations more raw and childiſh than they do to ourſelves. It is not uncommon for a young heir juſt come of age and into poſſeſſion of an eſtate, to have a much higher opinion of his own importance, than a more experienced perſon. The idea of each State by itſelf being ſovereign, if it be too much cheriſhed, may prove us to be like the members of the body ſaying one to the other "I have no need of you." We are known abroad as United States; our true ſovereignty conſiſts in our union, as our independence does in our not being ſubject to a foreign power. It is therefore the intereſt of every ſtate to render this united ſovereignty reſpectable in the higheſt degree; nor is there I preſume the leaſt danger that any one State will thereby loſe any part of that juſt dignity, which belongs to it as a diſtinct local juriſdiction, competent in all reſpects to its interior government, and independent of every other State and kingdom in the world. But if our confede-

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ſation be imperfect ; if the powers delegated to Congreſs are inſufficient to anſwer the ends for which our united ſovereignty was erected ; and if the retaining certain powers in the hands of each State cannot ſo well anſwer thoſe ends as if they were delegated, why ſhould we ſcruple to do it ? Why ſhould we be unwilling to truſt delegates of our own nomination, and who may be recalled at our pleaſure, with power to preſerve our public intereſts, to ſecure our credit, and eſpecially to fulfill engagements which we have already given them power to contract ? If we are afraid to truſt one another, who will truſt us ? If we are unreaſonably jealous of our beſt men, who wiſh to extricate us out of our difficulties, ſhall we not render our independence contemptible ? Shall we not ſubject ourſelves to the impoſitions of foreigners ; and probably ſow the ſeeds of ſome controverſy, which may be fatal to our preſent union ? If we would preſerve peace at home and abroad, we muſt be honeſt and punctual ; we muſt learn to entertain liberal ſentiments, to confide in thoſe who wiſh to do their duty, and preſerve our and their intereſts. † In ſhort we muſt be true to ourſelves

† Since the delivery of this diſcourſe, the Legiſlature have by an act veſted the United States in Congreſs aſſembled, with full power to regulate trade for fifteen years, provided all the other States in the union do the ſame.

ſelves and our friends, as well as formidable to thoſe who may be our enemies.

THE fourth and laſt object of national proſperity mentioned in the text is *religion*. "*Happy is that people whoſe* GOD *is the* LORD." It is probable that the royal and devout Pſalmiſt meant by theſe words to ſet Jehovah the God of Iſrael, in preference to all other Gods, of whom the neighbouring nations had a variety. All the nations had their reſpective Gods, whom they worſhipped, and on whoſe providence and protection they placed a dependence. They were regarded as local deities, having a limitted juriſdiction, and not interfering with each others territories. Though their worſhippers had very groſs and even ridiculous conceptions of them; yet the ardor, the conſtancy, and the ſincerity with which they worſhipped and truſted in them, were ſo viſible, that the prophets made uſe of this conſideration to reprove the fickleneſs of the Jews, in the worſhip of the true GOD. "*Hath a nation changed their Gods, which are yet no Gods?*" ‡ It is really very inſtructive to obſerve, among the antient nations, how careful they were to perform religious rites, and make offerings to their Gods at the beginning, or concluſion of any national undertaking; and it would

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‡ JEREMIAH II. 11.

be too bold for us to determine, that the zeal and ſincerity which they exerciſed in theſe religious ceremonies, though they miſtook the object, was entirely uſeleſs to them, or that it was not approved and rewarded by the ſearcher of hearts. But the argument in favor of a national religion is not built wholly on the example of the heathen; it is a dictate of reaſon. What reaſon taught them it alſo teaches us; and our ſuperior advantages enable us to correct their miſtakes, to worſhip the true GOD, and confide in him, in ſuch a manner as is now made known to be agreeable to his will.

LET no man here take an alarm as if by a national religion, I would recommend the eſtabliſhment of any modes or forms in preference to others. The world has too long been abuſed with attempts to impoſe uniformity; and our conſtitution has wiſely avoided that fatal rock, on which conſcience and truth have often ſuffered ſhipwreck. By a national religion I would be underſtood to mean, an acknowledgement of the being, perfections and providence of one ſupreme GOD; a ſenſe of his moral government both in this and a future State; and a careful obſervance of the eternal laws of juſtice, truth and mercy in all our public conduct. If theſe principles be admitted into

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our national councils, and our national character be formed upon them, we may truly be ſaid to have the LORD for our GOD, however different our ſpeculations or practice may be as individuals or religious ſocieties. Theſe are principles in which honeſt men of all denominations will agree; and if by a ſtrict adherence to them we acknowledge GOD in all our public ways, we ſhall have reaſon to hope and believe that he will direct our ſteps.

IT is not an uncommon thing for perſons who are aſhamed to appear irreligious or immoral in their private conduct, when they come into public life, and act as members of a political body, to lay aſide all ſenſe of GOD and duty, and act only according to craft or policy or conveniency. Whether they think that the State has no ſuch thing as a public conſcience; or that the blame being divided among ſo many, each one's ſhare is too trifling to be regarded; or, whether they have any thought upon the matter at all, may not be eaſy to determine, but it is to be feared the fact is true, and that the public have often felt the ill conſequence of it. When public men act thus, they certainly have not the fear of GOD before their eyes; and to what purpoſe do they, as men, profeſs to know the true GOD, when, as rulers, they

have not ſo much religion as many of the old heathens? How many illuſtrious examples might be brought from antiquity, of men who had no more exalted idea of the Deity than that he reſided on Mount Olympus, or in ſome "*temple made with hands*," and yet in all their public conduct acted with a ſacred regard to juſtice and truth, and a firm conviction that their actions were regarded by a ſuperior Being, on whoſe favor depended all the national proſperity! Such examples may juſtly put many to the bluſh, who profeſs a purer religion, but form not their conduct by its heavenly dictates.

If we would be an happy people, we muſt as a people, "*have the* Lord *for our* God." Our public men muſt have ſo much religion as to believe that God is a witneſs to all their public conduct, and requires that it be conformable to the rules of righteouſneſs. When they enter the court-chamber, they ſhould recollect that they are in the preſence of the Supreme Ruler. In all their debates, their votes and acts they ſhould conſider, not merely what will ſerve a turn, or pleaſe their conſtituents; but what is right and juſt; what will ſtand the teſt of reaſon and truth; and what will God approve. It would not be amiſs if every night the public actions of

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the day were reviewed with ſuch ſelf-enquiries as theſe, "what have I done this day, to ſerve the 'true intereſt of my country? what motives and 'conſiderations have I been governed by, whether 'of intereſt or policy? and how have they correſ-'ponded with the unchangeable rules of reaſon, 'truth and juſtice?" Theſe reflections may be equally uſeful to all executive and judicial officers, and to every man acting in a public capacity. If all ſuch men would form their conduct on ſuch a plan, or if the people would chuſe into office none but perſons who appear to be governed by ſuch principles, we ſhould be regarded by the ſearcher of hearts as a people fearing the LORD, and might on good grounds expect that our national virtues would be rewarded with national bleſſings.

I have now finiſhed what I propoſed to ſay from the hints offered to us in the text; and if I have not already wearied your patience, would aſk your attention a little longer, while I endeavor to lead you into ſome reflections which may ſerve to enforce the foregoing conſiderations, as duties peculiarly required of us at this day.

DIVINE providence has not only given us a good land to live in, but has diſappointed the attempts and expectations of enemies of various kinds, both in former and later times, to diſpoſ-

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ſeſs us of it, or ſubject us to their dominion. A foreign government was always inconvenient, and, as it was at laſt managed, grew inſupportable. God, who has made every country ſufficient to govern itſelf, ſmiled on our ſtruggles for emancipation, and conducted us through a long courſe of difficulties, to a ſtate of freedom and peace. And now that we have eſcaped and are at reſt, it will be of uſe to us, like the ſeaman when he has braved the fury of the waves, and got ſafe on ſhore, to look back on the dangers through which we have paſſed, and the narrow eſcapes which we have experienced, and ſee by what means our deliverance has been accompliſhed, with a grateful ſenſe of the divine goodneſs, and a reſolution to improve our preſent advantages to the nobleſt purpoſes.

It is indeed aſtoniſhing that ſo enlightened a nation as Britain, which has produced ſo many wiſe and learned men, who were able clearly to foreſee and predict, and ſome of them publicly and faithfully to warn the nation of the conſequences of engaging in a quarrel with us, ſhould ruſh ſo blindly and headſtrong as they did into a controverſy, which has diſmembered their empire, and diſgraced their characters, and given them "*a wound which no time can heal.*" ‖ But it was the

‖ This ſentiment is quoted from the concluſion of a truly prophetic ſpeech delivered by the celebrated author of Leonidas, Mr.

the appointment of heaven, recorded long ſince in the volume of inſpiration, that thoſe ten kingdoms which were repreſented by the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image ſhould be "*partly ſtrong and partly broken*" and that they ſhould "*not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.*"† Britain is undoubtedly one of thoſe kingdoms ‡ and theſe muſt be her national characteriſtics as long as ſhe continues a nation. If we derived ſtrong conſolation from this prophecy in the height of the war, we muſt have proportionable ſatisfaction in ſeeing the concluſion of it verify the prediction, and an additional evidence thereby adduced to the truth of divine revelation. We muſt then believe that the ſeperation which has been made, was the reſult of cauſes, which were foreſeen and foretold, by him to whom all his works are fully known from the beginning. All the wiſdom of the wiſeſt, all the oratory of the moſt eloquent, and

Mr. GLOVER, when he appeared before the Houſe of Commons, March 1775, as agent for the Weſt-India merchants, to ſupport their petition againſt the bill then pending to reſtrain and ruin our fiſhery. The ſpeech has not to my knowledge been reprinted in America; but it is worthy to be read by every American, being dictated by a profound knowledge of human nature, and a large acquaintance with antient and modern hiſtory.

See the parliamentary regiſter, 1775, in which it is remarked that while this energetic ſpeech was delivering, Lord NORTH, the *Palinurus* of the kingdom, was *a-ſleep* in his ſeat! a fatal omen!

† DANIEL II. 42. 43.

‡ See Mr. MEDE, Sir I. NEWTON and Biſhop NEWTON's diſcourſes on this prophecy, and the correſponding one in REV. XIII.

and all the ſtrength of the moſt powerful could not fruſtrate the decree of heaven, that America muſt be ſeperated from Brittain. She pretended a right to this country, and aſſumed to grant it to us; but our right is ſuperior to what hers ever was. We have purchaſed it of its native lords, we have ſubdued it, we have peopled it, we have defended it, we have paid the price of it over and over again, we have paid it not only in our ſubſtance and labour, but in blood, in the rich blood of our fathers, and brethren and children. It is then moſt aſſuredly ours, and he who hath given it to us requires us to preſerve it, and govern it, and improve every one of thoſe advantages which he hath ſo liberally given us in it and with it; and he hath ſo connected our duty and our intereſt in this, as well as every other reſpect, that they are inſeperable.

If in our ſtate of infancy we have committed errors and blunders, this is no more than what might naturally be expected of us. We were raw and unſkilled in government, in finances and in war. We had to contend with a rich and formidable nation, and they who beſt knew her power and wealth were moſt fearful of the iſſue. We had to ſeek reſources, and invent means of raiſing ſupplies. We were ſeveral months after the war

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began learning to fabricate materials for carrying it on; and we were ſeveral years after that ſtriving to create money and enforce its credit; to regulate prices and command trade. All that time our enemies were expending their money and ſtores, teaching us how to fight, and puſhing themſelves into ſuch difficulties that with proper exertions on our part, and by the help of our allies, they fell into our hands by whole armies at a time; 'till wearied with their violent but ineffectual attempts, and having run themſelves into a moſt horrible depth of debt and miſery, they were obliged to give up the point, and leave us to ourſelves, which was all that we deſired.

We have now opportunity to review the whole ſcene, to ſee how much providence hath done for us, and how we have been ſaved with an high hand. In conſequence of this deliverance, we have had the privilege, ſcarce ever granted to any people before, deliberately, and without fear or reſtraint from any foreign cauſes, to form and reſolve upon a plan of government for ourſelves and our poſterity; and if it does not anſwer the end for which it was deſigned, we have reſerved to ourſelves the liberty to reviſe and alter it at a future period. Are not our obligations to the divine goodneſs exceeding great? are we not "*a people ſaved of the*

LORD,

LORD, *who is the ſhield of our help and the ſword of our excellency ?*" and what is required of us in gratitude to our Supreme Ruler and bountiful benefactor, but to govern ourſelves by the laws of juſtice and truth, and to improve to our utmoſt the rich gifts of his paternal providence ?

As the divine counſels are opened to us by the events of time, we have reaſon to believe, that one great end which GOD had in view, in the original diſcovery of this American continent, and in baffling all the attempts which European princes have made, to ſubject it to their dominion, and in giving us quiet poſſeſſion of it as our own land, was, that it might prove an aſſylum for the oppreſſed and diſtreſſed in other parts of the world. Our fathers fled hither from the perſecutions which they endured in England ; and many thouſands of oppreſſed people in the Britiſh dominions as well as Germany have fled for refuge to America already ; many more are daily coming, and the reputation of this conntry is daily riſing all over Europe. Our mode of living, and the diviſion of property among us being different from that in the old countries, are circumſtances, very inviting to foreigners. As in the ſea, the great fiſh devour the ſmaller, ſo in thoſe countries, the landed intereſt is in the hands of a few, and the

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reſt are dependent on them : here property is more equally divided, and the chance of acquiring it is much more in favor of the poor, if they be honeſt and induſtrious ; and intereſt being a prevailing principle with all men they are naturally prompted to purſue it in the moſt likely and ſhorteſt courſe. From theſe cauſes we may expect a rapid population of this extenſive country ; and when we conſider the agency of divine providence in ſucceeding our late attempt to ſeperate ourſelves from foreign dependence, we muſt believe that GOD had therein not only a kind intention toward us, but toward mankind in general, opening a place for them to flee to from the poverty, oppreſſion and diſtreſs, which are ſo prevalent in other countries. This may ſerve in time to humble the haughty ſpirit of ſome of the European princes and nobles, and induce them to treat their ſubjects and vaſſals with more lenity, and ſo be the means of extenſive benefit to mankind ; but whether it ſhould have that effect on them or not, it will be our wiſdom and intereſt to let mankind know that here is a good country, in which they may find ſubſiſtence, and good government, where they may be ſecure from oppreſſion, and enjoy their liberty.

WHILE we are reaping the fruit of our ſtruggles and ſufferings, while we are enjoying our houſes

houſes, fields, families, and privileges civil and religious, can we forget the God to whoſe gracious interpoſition we owe theſe bleſſings? had not he defeated the hoſtile deſigns formed againſt us, we might by this time have been a miſerably oppreſſed and enſlaved people. Thoſe who hated us would have been our rulers; our lands would have been located to petty tyrants; our trade burdened with every kind of reſtriction; our taxes ſevere, and without end; thoſe who complain of taxes now, would have had tenfold more cauſe of complaint; we muſt have been held in the moſt rigorous ſubjection; or have been driven back into the wilderneſs to herd among the ſavages, deſpiſed and deteſted even by them. Our circumſtances now are in ſome reſpects difficult; but how much worſe they would have been, if the arms of Britain had prevailed, let the miſerable inhabitants of India tell.

It is one of the weakneſſes of human nature, that we never enjoy ourſelves ſo well as when we have ſome kind of miſery before our eyes, or within our contemplation. He who has been ſick, or ſees another ſick, has an higher reliſh of health than he who never knew what ſickneſs was. He who is delivered from confinement, or ſees others enduring it, has a proportionably higher ſenſe of

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the value of liberty: ſo when we view our fellow-men in bondage, and feel ourſelves free; or, when we find ourſelves delivered from the fear of ſlavery, and ſecured in the poſſeſſion of liberty, we enjoy a greater ſatisfaction and pleaſure, than if we had never ſeen or known reſtraint. Let a ſenſe of the value of theſe bleſſings raiſe our ardent gratitude to our divine Benefactor, and let this gratitude be expreſſed in the moſt effectual manner, by making a right uſe of his gifts, and improving them to thoſe purpoſes for which he hath beſtowed them upon us.

My reſpected audience will, I doubt not, find ſufficient reaſon for the omiſſion of perſonal addreſſes, and compliments on this occaſion. Public praiſe when rightly beſtowed, is a reward of ſervices performed. The man of true merit will not ſeek the praiſe of his country but by earning it. He will be content to wait for his reward 'till his work is done; and when he is conſcious that he has done his beſt, he will have a ſatisfaction in his mind, which though it may be increaſed by the applauſe of his countrymen, yet cannot be diminiſhed by their neglect, nor even by their miſtaken cenſures and diſapprobation. To do real ſervice to his country is the aim of the patriot; applauſe is but an accidental thing, which he may

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either get or miſs in the courſe of his ſervices, but which is not the principal object of his concern. Such men only are fit for public offices; and it is our hope that thoſe gentlemen who are now by the ſuffrages of the people, or who may by the favor of their Repreſentatives be advanced to the ſeats of government, will prove themſelves worthy of the truſt repoſed in them, by diſcharging it with fidelity.

Under ſuch a conſtitution as we now enjoy, where every man is an elector, and many perſons at once capable of being elected, it is our wiſdom and intereſt to be well acquainted with each other. Thoſe who are placed in a public light as candidates for honor and power, muſt not think it ſtrange if their characters ſhould undergo a public ſcrutiny: it is a tribute which they muſt pay to the conſtitution, and if they ſtand the teſt, the laurel when obtained will ſit more gracefully on their brow. But it becomes us to be exceedingly careful whom we elect. Though it may not be ſtrictly true that the conſtitution "which is beſt adminiſtred is beſt;" ‡ yet it is certain that the beſt conſtitution which can be formed, may by bad management be ſo perverted, as not to anſwer the end of government ſo well as one of inferior goodneſs well adminiſtred. So much depends on the right uſe of the powers of government, that

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we cannot be too careful in our choice of rulers nor too vigilant of the uſe which they make of the powers delegated to them. But the beſt of men may err; and if the error be ſudden and involuntary, if it be not perſiſted in, but as far as poſſible retracted, it ought ſurely to be forgiven. Government is a weighty taſk, and they who bear the burden on their ſhoulders have every claim to a fair and candid interpretation of their conduct.

For a concluſion, let me remind this whole audience, that the beſt forms of human government are of themſelves inſufficient to protect mankind from inſult and invaſion, and to preſerve to them the invaluable bleſſings of "peace, liberty and ſafety" for any long duration. The luſts of men will produce wars and tumults, diſaffection and uſurpation, which will lead to revolutions and conqueſts. Why is all this miſery permitted in a world that is governed by infinite wiſdom and goodneſs? Is it not to ſhew us that we are not to regard this as our final ſtate, and to induce us to look forward with joyful expectation to that grand period, when the prince of peace ſhall ſubdue all things to himſelf? Every ſpecies of human government contains the ſeeds of diſſolution, which will ſome time or other work its ruin; but the kingdom of *Jeſus Chriſt* being founded in eternal righteouſneſs

teouſneſs, ſupported by almighty power, and conducted by infinite wiſdom and benevolence, muſt anſwer the end of government, and therefore muſt end in perfection. When the periods of the kingdoms of this world are ſpoken of in ſcripture, they are ſaid to "*be deſtroyed*" to "*paſs away*" and to "*be broken in pieces*; but the conſummation of the kingdom of Chriſt is repreſented by its being "*delivered up into the hands of* GOD *the Father*," as having completely attained the great end, for which it was erected.

How happy then are they who have in their hearts ſubmitted to this glorious King, and have formed themſelves on the wiſe and peaceful maxims of his government; and how truly happy will mankind be, when this kingdom which now like "*a ſtone cut out without hands*" is "*ſmiting the image on its feet*" ſhall "*become a great mountain and fill the whole earth.*" In the proſpect of that illuſtrious day, let us anticipate the ſong which we ſhall hereafter ſing in concert with "*every creature in heaven and earth.*" "*Bleſſing and honor and glory and power be to him that ſitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever.*" AMEN.